

CHAPTER VI

ISIS

THE original meaning of the goddess Isis is still more difficult to determine than that of her brother and husband Osiris. Her attributes and epithets were so numerous that of Isis. in the hieroglyphics she is called " the many-named," " the thousand-named/³ and in Greek inscriptions " the myriad-named." ¹ The late eminent Dutch scholar C. P. Tiele confessed candidly that " it is now impossible to tell precisely to what natural phenomena the character of Isis at first referred/" Yet he adds, " Originally she was a goddess of fecundity." ² Similarly Dr. Budge writes that ^a Isis was the great and beneficent goddess and mother, whose influence and love pervaded all heaven and earth and the abode of the dead, and she was the personification of the great feminine, creative power which conceived, and brought forth every living creature and thing, from the gods in heaven to man on the earth, and to the insect on the ground ; what she brought forth she protected, and cared for, and fed, and nourished, and she employed her life in using her power graciously and successfully, not only in creating new beings but in restoring those that were dead. She was, besides these things, the highest type of a faithful and loving wife

¹ H. Brugsch, *Religion imd Mytho-
Hest or Ast,
logie der alien Aegypter*, p. 645 ; W.
meaning of the
Dittenberger, *O-rientis Graeci Inscrip-
See A. Wiede-
tiones Selectae*, vol. ii. p. 433, No.
Religion of the Ancient
695 ; *Corpus Inscriptiionum Graecantni*,
iii. p. 1232, No. 4941. Compare H.
Dessau, *hiscriptiones Latinae Se/eclae*,
Egyptian
vol. ii. Pars'i. p. 179, No. 4376 A. *Religion* (London, 1882),
p. 57.

In Egyptian her name is
but the derivation and
name are unknown.

mann, *The
Egyptians* ^ pp. 218 sq.

^a C. P. Tiele, *History of*